Name: _____

Date: _____

THE RENAISSANCE
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The Renaissance Spreads

As trade made several Italian city-states prosperous, the cities became magnets for ambitious people from across Europe. Merchants came seeking opportunity, artists came seeking patrons, and young men traveled to universities such as Bologna and Padua to study law, medicine, and philosophy. As people and ideas flowed into Italy, its cities became centers of learning, culture, and innovation. When travelers returned home, they carried Renaissance ideas with them, helping spread the movement far beyond the Italian peninsula.

The Power of Print

Travelers could carry only the ideas they remembered. Johann Gutenberg's invention of the printing press made it possible to share the same knowledge with thousands of people. Before the printing press, books were copied by hand and were expensive. Most Europeans never traveled far from home, and few had access to books or schooling. Once printers could reproduce books quickly and cheaply, more people learned to read and gained access to new ideas.

The Low Countries

Northeast of Italy, present-day Belgium and the Netherlands are known as the Low Countries because the land rises only slightly above sea level. The Low Countries region was home to prosperous trading centers such as Antwerp and Amsterdam. As in Italy, wealthy merchants in these cities supported artists and learning. The Catholic Church continued to pay artists to create religious works, but many merchants in the region embraced Calvinism, a branch of Christianity that believed churches should be simple and free of decoration. As a result, merchants often bought portraits, landscapes, and scenes from everyday life.

While many Italian artists painted saints, biblical stories, and figures from classical mythology, artists of the Low Countries often painted farmers, festivals, and village life. The paintings of Pieter Bruegel the Elder provide a valuable glimpse into everyday life in sixteenth-century Europe.

The English Renaissance

Northwest of continental Europe, English merchants earned fortunes exporting wool and cloth to markets across Europe. As cities grew and universities such as Oxford and Cambridge attracted students, Renaissance ideas spread throughout England. As more people learned to read and write, they supported writers, printers, and theaters. English men and women flocked to large open-air theaters such as the Globe near London to watch plays by William Shakespeare and other dramatists.

Exploration and trade made Spain a wealthy nation. The most famous writer of the later Spanish Renaissance was Miguel de Cervantes, whose novel Don Quixote remains one of the most widely read books in the world.

A Transformed Continent

The Renaissance took different forms across Europe as new wealth mixed with local traditions and customs. In some places, merchants supported painters. In others, they supported writers, theaters, universities, and printers. By 1600, Europe was becoming a more commercial, connected, curious, and educated place than it had ever been before—a transformation that laid the foundation for the modern age.

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Name: _____

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Fill in the Blanks

During the Renaissance, t__a__e helped make several Italian city-states *p__o__p__r__us and attracted m__r__h__n__s, artists, and s__u__e__ts from across E__r__pe. Cities such as F__o__e__ce, Venice, and M__l__n became centers of l__a__n__ng, and innovation. As travelers returned home, they carried R__n__i__s__n__e ideas beyond I__a__y.

The invention of the p__i__t__ng press by Johann G__t__n__e__g made it possible to share k__o__l__dge throughout Europe. Before printing, books were c__p__ed by h_____ and were e__p__n__i__e. As books became cheaper and more available, l__t__r__cy increased and new ideas spread more quickly.

In the L__w C__u__t__i__s, prosperous merchants supported artists and learning. While the C__t__o__ic Church continued to s__o__s__r religious art, many merchants who had embraced C__l__i__i__m and preferred to purchase p__r__r__i__s, landscapes, and scenes of e__e__y__ay life. Pieter B__u__g__l the E__d__r painted detailed images of o__d__n__ry people and v__l__a__e life.

Renaissance ideas spread through Europe including E__g__a__d and S__a__n due to growing w__a__th, trade, u__i__e__s__t__es, writers, t__e__t__rs, and printers. By 1600, Europe had become more connected, educated, commercial, and curious than ever before.

Answer in Complete Sentences

1. Why were people from throughout Europe interested in Italy?

_____

_____

_____

*2. Compare the art of the Low Countries with Italian art during the Renaissance.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

*A higher order learning question. Any reasonable answer will be accepted.

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